



To: Lisa Beutler
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From: Nick Di Croce

Subject: Format of the Implementation and Investment Guide

During the January 5 Workshop on Chapter 1, you asked for input on the format and contents of “The Guide,” as I will refer to it. I don’t think I can stress enough what I believe is the importance of a crisp, clear and understandable format for that table in Chapter 1 and in the Executive Summary, so I will amplify on my thoughts.

Although I don’t usually try to wear my credentials on my sleeve, I feel the need to do it for this subject, so here goes: In my 40 years in the business world, both as a senior manager and as an international consultant, I have personally produced or been responsible for innumerable reports intended for executive review and decision making. I have earned my living advising management on how to produce clear, action-oriented reports and summaries, and I am a serious student of the subject. My natural tendency is to take a managerial viewpoint on these subjects, and that leads me to my conclusions on the optimum format and usage for The Guide.

Since The Guide can be made into the key action item of the Chapter (and the Plan, for that matter), it needs to initially be presented in as reasonably concise a form as is possible and it needs to be closely linked to the Key Findings and Key Recommendations of the report. “Reasonably concise” in this case would include only the three action-oriented column headings (Resource Management Strategy, Potential 2030 Supply Benefits, and Estimated Costs) and would list in the horizontal columns only the actions that are being quantified under Supply Benefits and Costs. All of the other Water Management Objectives which are now shown in a matrix format – while important to the overall plan – tend to obfuscate the action-oriented Supply Benefit items in the Guide. Additionally, all the 25 Water Management Strategies are exhaustively discussed in subsequent chapters of the Plan. By the same token, a more detailed and complete Implementation and Investment Guide, showing the additional Water Management Strategies matrix should be subsequently included in an appropriate later section of Chapter 1 or – more preferably – in Chapter 6.

With this type of simplification and two-step presentation of The Guide, decision makers can initially focus on the two primary questions that will always be on their minds: “What are the key recommendations of this report?” and “What actions do I need to take?” If the decision maker’s interest has been captured at this point, then the next steps of examining more detail will naturally follow. It also logically follows that the additional detail that a decision-maker’s staff will examine is contained in subsequent sections of the report. To imply that a decision maker can be misled by a brief summary table such as The Guide and its Key Recommendations is to underestimate the experience and role of key decision makers.

In tandem with a “Summary Implementation and Investment Guide,” (as it can be retitled for Chapter 1) there should be Key Findings and Key Recommendations that discuss this same subject. All other findings and recommendations should be shown as “Other Findings” and “Other Recommendations” in Chapter 1. *California’s Groundwater*, DWR Bulletin 118 Update 2003, is an excellent model for this approach. In the workshop discussion today, we also suggested that a Key Finding related to the range of potential supply and demand reduction data must be shown along with the existing Key Finding related to future demands. We believe that this is vital in order to maintain a balance in the Plan and to preclude going back to the previous “Gap Analysis” only type of discussion.

By following these guidelines, I believe you will produce a Chapter 1 and an Executive Summary that will capture reader’s attention and attract their interest in finding more details related to the Key Findings and Key Recommendations. In doing so, DWR will produce a plan that well serves its intended purpose.

I recommend these steps to you in the objective of producing a readable, informative and action-oriented State Water Plan. I will also waive my customary \$450 per hour consulting rate for this input!

Nick Di Croce
For the Environmental Caucus